

STATE CHARTER SCHOOLS COMMISSION

MEETING SUMMARY

September 9-10, 2021
Lake Lanier Legacy Lodge
7000 Lanier Island Parkway
Buford, Georgia 30518



Attendees: Commissioners: Buzz Brockway-Chairman; Tony Lowden-Vice-Chair; Fitz Johnson; Dr. Lina Millan; Jose Perez; Hunter Hill; and Mike Dudgeon. SCSC Staff: Lauren Holcomb – Executive Director; Morgan Felts – Chief Operations Officer; Cerrone Lockett – General Counsel; Kristen Easterbrook – Charter Development Manager; Kathy Schieber – Financial Analyst; Katie Manthey – Director of Research and Evaluation; Kristen Settlemire – Associate General Counsel; Kiara Thompson – Program Coordinator; and Erica Acha-Morfaw – Administrative and Communications Coordinator.

September 9, 2021

- I. **Call to Order (Chairman Brockway)**
 - Chairman Brockway called the meeting to order at 10:07 a.m.
 - The following Commissioners attended the meeting: Commissioners Brockway, Perez, Johnson, Hill, Millan, and Dudgeon. A quorum was formed.

- II. **Welcome and Opening Remarks (Chairman Brockway and SCSC Executive Director)**
 - Chairman Brockway welcomed commissioners and staff to the retreat.
 - The Executive Director shared the retreat goals of developing an agency vision statement and roadmap for intentional portfolio growth.

- III. **Vision Statement Planning (SCSC Chief Operations Officer)**
 - The Chief Operations Officer discussed the value of an agency vision statement and led commissioners and staff in an activity to develop the SCSC vision statement.

- IV. **SCSC Performance Standards – How does the SCSC assess school quality? Review of the SCSC Comprehensive Performance Framework (SCSC Executive Director, SCSC Director of Research and Evaluation, SCSC General Counsel, SCSC Chief Operations Officer)**
 - The Director of Research Evaluation explained the evaluation of academic performance under the SCSC’s Comprehensive Performance Framework (“CPF”).
 - The Chief Operations Officer discussed CPF financial metrics and how schools satisfy their annual financial requirements.
 - The General Counsel explained the calculation of CPF operations scores.
 - The Director of Research and Evaluation and the Executive Director discussed charter renewal expectations.
 - Commissioners asked questions about the CPF framework and school performance.

- V. School Climate in Accountability (SCSC Executive Director and SCSC Director of Research and Evaluation)**
- The Executive Director and the Director of Research and Evaluation presented information on the use school climate ratings and led commissioners in a discussion about the extent to which climate ratings should be considered (formally or informally) in making charter renewal decisions.
- VI. Vision Statement Planning (SCSC Chief Operations Officer)**
- The Chief Operations Officer presented draft vision statement results from the earlier activity.
 - Commissioners provided feedback on the draft vision statements.
- VII. Upholding SCSC Standards: State Charter Schools' Progress Towards Renewal (SCSC Executive Director and SCSC Director of Research and Evaluation)**
- The Executive Director and the Director of Research and Evaluation detailed the timeline for charter renewal petitions and profiled the seven schools up for renewal in 2022.
 - Commissioners discussed the information presented, as well as other metrics for school performance, including character education.
- VIII. Vision Statement Planning (SCSC Chief Operations Officer)**
- The Chief Operations Officer presented revised options for the vision statement based on the feedback received during the prior vision statement activity.
 - Commissioners discussed other ideas for the agency's vision statement and additional measures for evaluating whether a charter school provides a better educational opportunity.
- IX. Adjourn**
- The meeting was adjourned at 5:04 p.m.

September 10, 2021

- I. Call to Order (Chairman Brockway)**
- Chairman Brockway called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m.
 - The following Commissioners attended the meeting: Commissioners Brockway, Lowden, Perez, Johnson, Hill, Millan, and Dudgeon. A quorum was formed.
- II. Welcome and Opening Remarks (SCSC Executive Director)**
- The Executive Director summarized the presentations and discussions from the first day of the policy retreat. She stated that the remainder of the policy retreat would be forward thinking in terms of how the SCSC can strategically grows its portfolio of schools to achieve the agency's vision.
- III. Vision Statement Planning (SCSC Chief Operations Officer)**
- The Chief Operations Officer presented two draft vision statements for Commissioners to review.
 - Commissioners provided feedback and suggested language for the draft vision

statements.

IV. Growth Considerations: What strategies should the SCSC take with regard to school portfolio to achieve the desired vision? (SCSC Executive Director, SCSC General Counsel, SCSC Charter Development Manager, SCSC Director of Research and Evaluation)

- The Executive Director discussed the findings of the Georgia Charter School Pipeline Report and growth challenges faced by state charter schools. She outlined the current SCSC school portfolio, specifically as to geography, grade bands, student demographics, and instructional models, and discussed portfolio gaps.
- The General Counsel presented various strategies for addressing portfolio gaps, including establishing petition priorities, replicating and expanding high quality schools, and grand band expansion.
- The General Counsel recommended that the board approve a replication and expansion policy consistent with the criteria presented, the specific language for which the board would consider at a later time.
 - Commissioner Lowden made a motion to approve the recommendation as stated. Commissioner Dudgeon seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
 - Commissioner Hill was not present for this vote.
- The General Counsel recommended that the board approve a grade band policy consistent with the criteria presented, the specific language for which the board would consider at a later time.
 - Commissioner Lowden made a motion to approve the recommendation as stated. Commissioner Perez seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
 - Commissioner Hill was not present for this vote.
- The Charter Development Manager discussed various challenges faced by state charter schools attempting to replicate and expand.

V. Strategic Planning Recommendations (SCSC Executive Director)

- Commissioner Millan made a motion to adopt the following agency vision statement: “Innovative and superior charter schools advancing education in every community.” Commissioner Dudgeon seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Commissioner Hill was not present for this vote.
- Commissioners and staff discussed various mechanisms to raise money for and awareness of state charter schools.

VI. Adjourn

- The meeting was adjourned at 12:16 p.m.